

TAFT DENIES CHARGES OF PLAYING POLITICS

Asserts in Message to Congress Accusers in House Are Telling "Untruths."

BLOW AT SPOILS SYSTEM

Order Placing 36,000 Postmasters Under Civil in Interest of Efficient Service, He Says.

Washington, Dec. 19.—President Taft gave Congress his opinion today of the charge that he had been playing politics in his recent executive order putting 36,000 fourth-class postmasters under the Civil Service. The President made the counter charge that his accusers on the floor of the House were telling "untruths" and declared that he deeply regretted the failure of Congress to pass legislation which practically would destroy the "spoils system."

"Criticism has been made of this order on the ground that the motive was political," said the President. "Nothing could be further from the truth. The order was made before the election, and in the interest of efficient public service. I have several times requested Congress to give me authority to put first, second and third class postmasters under the civil service, including internal revenue officers, customs officers, United States marshals and the local agents of the other departments under the classification of the civil service law by taking away the necessity for confirming such appointments by the Senate. I deeply regret the failure of Congress to follow these recommendations. The change would have taken out of politics practically every local officer and would have entirely cured the evils growing out of what, under the present law, must always remain a remnant of the spoils system."

The President's advice to Congress was contained in a message sent today. It was devoted largely to a review of the accomplishments of several departments not touched in previous messages and to recommendations for legislation. The President advocated:

Legislation which would permit members of the Cabinet to sit in either House of Congress, with the right to enter into debate and answer questions, but without vote.

Adoption of the Postmaster General's plan for a readjustment of compensation to railways carrying mail.

A revision of the land laws to secure prompt disposition of land that should be turned over to private ownership.

Legislation affecting Alaska which would provide for leases of coal lands, and in respect to mining claims, the disposition of the coal lands and potash lands in the United States.

An act of Congress which would legalize a court authority to review the decisions of the Board of Civil Service Commissioners in the law itself to prevent its becoming an instrument of oppression, and would give the President the right to remove or appoint by himself any official in which they have a complete day in court.

The President closed his message with a recommendation that Congress make appropriations for a government building at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco and for the beautification of Washington. In his dispatch to Washington, the President said that the public utility commission was needed. The President expressed opposition to the granting of the electric franchise to city of Washington, and indicated the plans of the Commission of Fine Arts for city improvement.

HARRIMAN PLAN ARGUED

Court Asked to Define Rights of Union Pacific Stockholders.

Washington, Dec. 19.—The Supreme Court of the United States took under advisement a combined motion of the government and the Union Pacific Railroad attorneys for a more specific decree as to the rights of Union Pacific stockholders in the distribution of the \$25,000,000 of Southern Pacific stock owned by the Union Pacific. The railroad attorneys want the Union Pacific stockholders exclusively to be allowed to buy the stock. The government is opposed to such a privilege. The court's decision may be announced Monday.

Attorney General Wickersham filed a memorandum in opposition to the railroad plan, and expressing a willingness that the Union Pacific stockholders should be permitted to share in the distribution of the Southern Pacific stock with the Southern Pacific holders. He said in part:

"The effect of a mere pro rata distribution of the stock among the Union Pacific stockholders is wholly problematical. The stock lists afford but little clue to the real ownership. It is a well known fact that the stock is distributed among 22,000 stockholders, but Mrs. E. H. Harriman, Kuhn, Loeb & Co. and the directors of the Union Pacific Railroad company (including the Chicago & Northwestern Railway Company, represented on the board of directors by Mr. Martin Huggins) together hold \$41,251,000 of its stock. Indeed 283 holders together hold stock amounting to \$25,239,000, or 25 per cent of the whole. It is only the remaining \$19,919,500 of stock that is distributed among nearly 22,000 holders."

The railroad attorneys explained that they considered the only practicable method would be for the Union Pacific to offer the shares to its own shareholders pro rata, for purchase at a fair price, or to distribute the same as a dividend.

They refused to allow the Union Pacific stockholders to participate in such a distribution, they said, "would expose them to serious loss and possible irreparable injury. The offering for sale upon the open market of the Union Pacific's holding of Southern Pacific shares aggregating \$125,000,000 would not only inflict great injustice and irreparable damage upon the Union Pacific and its shareholders, but also would cause a serious financial disturbance by oversupplying the market demand for securities of this character and consequently depressing the price, not merely of the Southern Pacific's shares owned by the Union Pacific, but also of the shares of Southern Pacific held by others, and even of the securities of other corporations dealt in on the market during and for a long period after the offering of these Southern Pacific shares for sale."

THE DAY IN WASHINGTON

[From The Tribune Bureau.]

Washington, December 19.

Congress Adjourns.

The legislative year of 1912 was tucked away into history by Congress today. The process in the House was a purely perfunctory one, as there was obviously no quorum present, and just as obviously one could not be gathered together in Washington, most of the members having started for their own firesides for the Christmas holidays without awaiting the formality of hearing the Speaker's gavel fall. In the Senate it was quite different. The holiday respite was not welcomed by any display of appropriate good will. On the contrary, Democrats and Republicans, in an executive session of more than an hour, drew the lines of battle over the question of confirming nominations and prepared the way for the new year by defining the conflict that is to be fought after the holiday split has been exhausted.

Closes with Storm.

The farce-comedy tactics resorted to by the Democrats of the Senate, who scurry to the cloakroom at the mention of an executive session as a method of holding up the confirmation of President Taft's nominations, failed today. The Republicans succeeding, with the aid of some of the older Democrats, in carrying their point. The executive session having been ordered, the Democrats resorted to another filibustering ruse to delay consideration of the question. Senator Hitchcock, a member of the Postoffice Committee, made a point of order against the appointments of postmasters on the ground that they had not been regularly passed upon and reported by the committee. In this he was sustained at length by Senator Reed, who declined against this method of upsetting the proper procedure of the Senate. The nominations were reported in the fashion in which they have been reported for many years—by an individual member of the Postoffice Committee, who ascertained that there were no objections to the appointments from the Senators of the states in which they were made.

There are in the course of a Presidential term more than seven thousand such postal appointments. If Senator Hitchcock's protest is observed by the Democrats themselves the Postoffice Committee will be kept busy reporting on nominations, and the greater part of the time of the Senate will be necessary to confirm them. In opposing the present method of disposing of nominations of postmasters the Senate is following not only a wise but a necessary custom, and the older members do not hesitate to say that the Democrats are digging a pit for themselves if they insist on abolishing it.

Reform and the Pie Counter.

It became clear that it was not the spirit of reform but the demand for jobs that actuated the Democrats. Senator Hoke Smith, taking the minority reins into his hands, declared that President Taft had been holding up appointments because of the elections and that he had since made them to pay political debts, a course which the Democrats would never tolerate. Senator Smoot quoted statistics showing that at the close of previous Democratic administrations there had been no concerted move on the part of Republicans to prevent the confirmation of appointments. Senator Smith replied that the present situation was different. Senators Lodge and Root pleaded with the Democrats to allow the diplomatic appointments to be confirmed, but even this failed. In the end, all that was accomplished was the confirmation of the postmaster at Concord, N. H., which was done as a tribute to Senator Gallinger, one of the two presiding officers of the Senate.

Bristow Defiant.

Negatively the filibuster of the Democrats prevented the confirmation of the appointment of Colonel E. J. McClelland.

Brought Trust to Terms

Witness Says Harvester People Apologized to and Paid Rival.

Chicago, Dec. 19.—A. J. Glass, manager of the Adirondack Plant Company, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., testified today in the hearing in the government's suit to dissolve the international company, an alleged combination, that agents of the harvester company had told his customers that the Adirondack Plant company had been absorbed by the harvester company, and that they might as well order their headquarters.

"We waited until we were able to fasten responsibility for two such statements on harvester company agents, and then we filed two suits for \$10,000 each," said Mr. Glass. "The harvester company officials promptly came around and apologized and asked us to drop the suits. We agreed to do so if they would reimburse us the expenses the suits had cost us up to that time. They did so, and we dropped the suits."

Copies of advertisements by companies alleged to have been absorbed in the harvester company, but who proclaimed themselves as "independents," were introduced in evidence by government counsel.

ARCHBALD TRIAL HALTED

Adjourned Over Holidays, When Judge Will Testify.

Washington, Dec. 19.—After hearing several witnesses for the defense, the Senate today adjourned the trial of Judge Robert W. Archbald for the holidays. It will convene again January 3, when Judge Archbald will take the stand. Counsel for Judge Archbald made a vain effort today to conclude examining witnesses for the defense.

John W. Peale, of New York, identified several letters that passed between him, Judge Archbald and John Henry Jones regarding the purchase of the Oxford Washery, near Scranton, Penn., in which Jones and Judge Archbald are alleged to have been interested.

Thomas Ellsworth Davies, a mining engineer, of Scranton, testified that he examined the Katiddid culm bank, and reported to his clients not to touch it, because it was not worth what was asked for it.

MISSING MAN FOUND SLAIN

Salem, N. J., Dec. 19.—The body of Lippincott C. Johnson, a widower, sixty-eight years of age, was found today in the woods along the road between Elmer and Shirley, with his throat cut.

Although no weapon was found near the body, Coroner Hatcher was satisfied that the man had ended his own life and he so certified.

Johnson, who lived with his son-in-law, Warren Hatcher, at Salem, was last seen on December 1. At that time he seemed extremely nervous and was acting queerly. By when he left the house, he had not been seen again or heard from until his body was found several miles from home today.

STATE VOTE CANVASS GIVES WILSON 655,475

His Plurality Over President 200,047. While Taft's Over Roosevelt Is 65,407.

SULZER'S MARGIN 205,454

Proposition to Bond State for \$50,000,000 for Good Roads Carried by 376,283.

The Vanishing Navy.

Although the launching of ships goes on, the navy of the United States, comparatively speaking, grows smaller. A warning is presented the Democrats, who struggled to cut off appropriations for battleships altogether at the last session of Congress, in the Naval Year Book, the authority on naval matters in this country, which appeared today. The Year Book shows that the American Navy has already fallen to third place. In tonnage Great Britain, with 1,818,850; Germany second, with 877,225; the United States third, with 757,881 and France fourth, with 704,044. As represented by battleships of the dreadnought and battle cruiser type, which are coming to be regarded as the true indication of fighting strength, the comparison reflects still further the falling off of the United States. In ships of this type, including those building or authorized, Great Britain is first, with thirty-six, a tonnage of \$28,660; Germany second, with twenty-three, a tonnage of \$24,671. The United States is third, with only thirteen, a tonnage of 36,230.

Ansberry Napping.

Representative "Tim" Ansberry, of Ohio, is usually a wide-awake young legislator, fully alive to the needs and comforts of visiting constituents, but he was caught asleep at the switch today. While Mr. Ansberry pondered over plans to have a large delegation of constituents and Ohioans receive unusual privileges from the Speaker of the House the delegation itself went ahead and acquired rather than obtained the privilege. Mr. Ansberry awoke with a start an hour later. Three hundred champion growers of Ohio—most of them boys—marched into the House chamber soon after that body adjourned today and took the seats just vacated by members. Then they sent for Speaker Clark and "Uncle Joe" Cannon and prepared to listen to their speeches. Speaker Clark was almost dumfounded when he was called into the chamber and confronted with a cheering aggregation of young farmers. The rules of the House strictly declare the chamber shall be used only by members or by a party caucus. "I don't know how you got in here," said the Speaker to the boys, "but I presume no harm is done. However, when you come to Washington next time I would suggest you get authority to assemble in the House chamber, for it is against all rules and precedents." Then the Speaker delivered a diverting talk on agricultural topics, and "Uncle Joe" followed in like strain. Soon after the boys had marched out Representative Ansberry, who had gone to his office following the adjournment of the House, sent word to the doorkeeper that he had a number of constituents, and would like to have the Speaker address them in the chamber. "Could Mr. Sinnott fix it, rules to the contrary?"

"Tell him the boys came in, took possession of the floor and have already heard the speech," said Sinnott to the Ansberry messenger, and then the Ohio member realized that he hadn't been on the job.

Star Loses O'Brien Suit

Asked \$25,000 for Alleged Fraud in Supplying Coal to Prisons.

Albany, Dec. 19.—The complaint of the state in an action brought against John F. O'Brien, former Secretary of State, and George J. Kellogg, who are engaged in business under the name of the Dock and Coal Company of Plattsburgh, to recover about \$25,000 for alleged fraudulent claims presented and paid for coal said to be below grade furnished to Clinton and Sing Sing prisons was dismissed today by Justice Chester. The suit was an outgrowth of the prison investigation ordered by Governor Dix.

The company held that, as the complaint did not contain allegations of conspiracy on the part of the prison officials who received and passed on the amount and quality of coal, it could have no standing in court, and it was on this ground that the complaint was dismissed.

TAFT URGES BOYS TO FARM

Talks to Participants in Ohio Corn Growing Contest.

Washington, Dec. 19.—President Taft at the White House today strongly encouraged the "back to the country movement" in an address to boys who took part in the Ohio corn growing contest. The President spoke of the work the boys were engaged in as being of "the highest importance to all of us" and urged them to remain on the farms and pursue agriculture as a profession.

"We are bound to increase the yield per acre to keep up with the growing population," the President told the boys. "The farmers are becoming more and more important to us, especially in view of the fact that so many farmers or farmers' sons are going to the city. We must have a strong farming community. We must have strong, successful men who will remain in the country, who will furnish the food that this country needs. You boys are engaged in that work today, and I hope you will continue it."

PEER'S SON A BOY SCOUT

Lord Eustace Percy Offers to Train Boys in Washington.

Washington, Dec. 19.—Lord Eustace Percy, third secretary of the British Embassy, has volunteered his services to the local Boy Scout organization and may become a scout master. He was one of the originators of the movement in England. If the plan is carried out Lord Eustace will be the one English peer's son in charge of a Boy Scout troop in the United States. He is of the opinion that the spirit of national militarism should not prevail in the organization, but that the movement should be for the physical, moral and mental training of the boys of every country.

Lord Eustace is the youngest son of the Duke of Northumberland. He entertained several friends at a box party at Chase's Theatre last night. P. B. Chase, manager of the theatre, has arranged for a week's benefit for the Boy Scouts.

SMOKING STARTS FATAL FIRE

Man and Wife Suffocated When Pipe Ashes Ignite Mattress.

Joseph Corbion, who lived on the top floor of the house at No. 13 Washington street, set fire to the bed early yesterday with ashes from his pipe. He and his wife were suffocated by the smoke from the burning mattress.

Other tenants smelled the smoke and made them to the fire. Corbion was fifty years old and his wife was forty-five. They had been married only a few months.

WILSON FAILED TO REACH BRYAN'S MARK

His Total Vote 104,919 Below the Party Strength in 1908—Socialists Alone Show Marked Gains.

POPULAR VOTE FOR PRESIDENT, 1912.

The Tribune presents this morning, in the table which follows the official popular vote for Presidential candidates in 1912. The canvass of this vote has been delayed in many states, and the last one to complete the count was New York, which made public its official vote yesterday.

In view of the excitement created in the recent campaign for the Presidency and the popular opinion that an enormous vote would be brought out by the triangular contest between Wilson, Taft and Roosevelt, the figures of the national canvass contain some notable surprises. The total vote in 1912—15,041,655—is only 155,666 larger than the total vote of four years ago, in spite of the fact that two new states have been admitted to the Union since then and suffrage has been granted to women in the States of California and Washington. But for the accessions thus made to the roster of voters the popular vote of 1912 would have fallen below the popular vote of 1908.

Wilson and Marshall (Dem.), 655,475; Taft and Sherman (Rep.), 454,828; Roosevelt and Johnson (Prog.), 283,410; Debs and Watkins (Pro.), 15,477; Debs and Watkins (Pro.), 15,477; Debs and Watkins (Pro.), 15,477.

Governor-elect William Sulzer received a plurality of 266,441 over Job E. Hedges, his Republican opponent, while Oscar S. Strauss, the Progressive and Independence League candidate, received 9,922 less than Mr. Hedges.

The Democratic and Republican votes for state officers follow:

For Governor—William Sulzer (Dem.), 655,475; Job E. Hedges (Rep.), 454,828.

For Lieutenant Governor—Martin H. Glynn (Dem.), 66,782; James W. Wadsworth, Jr. (Rep.), 46,538.

For Secretary of State—Mitchell May (Dem.), 64,952; Francis M. Hugo (Rep.), 60,651.

For Comptroller—William Schaner (Dem.), 62,882; William D. Cunningham (Rep.), 62,901.

For Treasurer—John J. Kennedy (Dem.), 62,815; William Archer (Rep.), 49,175.

For Attorney General—Thomas Carmody (Dem.), 63,856; Meier Steinbrink (Rep.), 47,833.

For State Engineer and Surveyor—John A. Bensch (Dem.), 619,831; Frank M. Williams (Rep.), 46,122.

For Associate Judges of the Court of Appeals—William H. Cuddeback (Rep.), 64,626; John W. Hogan (Dem.), 62,091.

Frank H. Hiscok (Rep.), 69,886; Emory A. Chase (Rep.), 67,745.

The proposition to bond the state for an additional \$50,000,000 for good roads construction was carried by 376,283 votes. There were 675,545 votes cast in favor of the proposal and 283,252 recorded against it.

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